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Minutes of the Meeting
The Commission of Fine Arts
10 May 1956

The Commission met pursuant to notice at 9:30 a.m. with Mr. David E. Finley, Chairman, presiding.

Present were: David E. Finley, Chairman
Douglas W. Orr, Vice Chairman
Wallace H. Harrison
Elbert Peets
Felix W. de Weldon
Mrs. Emily Muir
William G. Perry

L.R. Wilson, Secretary

Department of State

Diplomatic Courier Service Medal-revised design

The members considered a drawing for the revised design of the proposed lapel button for use by the Diplomatic Courier Service. They agreed they could not approve it because the detail and the map in the center would be too small to be of any value when reduced to final size. It was recommended that a request for a design be submitted to the Heraldic Branch of the Department of the Army, Office of the Quartermaster General, for assistance in getting the best possible design. Exhibit A.

International Cooperation Administration

Service Awards Emblem

The members considered designs submitted for the International Cooperation Administration award emblem for ten, twenty, and thirty years of service. None of the designs, in the opinion of the members, possessed sufficient artistic merit to be recommended for use by the agency. It was recommended that the problem be submitted to the Heraldic Branch, Department of the Army, Office of the Quartermaster General, for assistance in getting the best possible design. Mr. DuBois, the technical director of the Heraldic Branch stated he would be willing to study the matter and hoped to have a design ready for submission at the next meeting of the Commission on June 14. Exhibit B.

Department of the Army

Atomic Energy Commission Medal for Distinguished Service and for Outstanding Service

The members considered the drawings for the designs of the obverse and reverse of the above noted medal. After careful study, they agreed that the design of the obverse was overburdened with details that confused the composition. They suggested that all the symbolic

material be restricted to the globe and the atomic diagram that surrounds it. They also preferred a round globe to the flattened spheroid shown on the drawing submitted; and recommended that the ribbon bearing the motto be raised and given more space around it. The reverse of the medal was considered satisfactory. A revised design of the obverse was desired in time for the next meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts. Exhibit C.

General Services Administration
Public Buildings Service

Department of State Addition-progress drawings

Representatives of the Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration, and the architects presented current plans and drawings for the annex to the State Department building. After a careful discussion of the elevations and the areas of the interior offices and discussion of the elevations and the areas of the interior offices and conference rooms, the members considered that the drawings were far from satisfactory, and made suggestions for changes. In order not to cause undue delay, it was agreed the architect members and the representatives of the Public Buildings Service would meet in Mr. Harrison's office in New York on Monday, June 4, to discuss revisions suggested by the members of the Commission of Fine Arts at today's meeting.

Shipstead-Luce - Preliminary submissions

a. St. John's High School, Military Road, Oregon Avenue and 27th Street

The architect showed and explained to the members the plans and drawings for the new building for St. John's College. After a detailed discussion of the architectural features, suggestions for changes were made; and it was agreed that revised drawings would be submitted to the next meeting of the Commission on June 14.

b. D.J.Kaufman's Clothing Store
1005 Pennsylvania Avenue

The architect presented and explained the plan for a new facade of aluminum and enamelled panel for the front of the store of D.J.Kaufmann. After a discussion of materials and colors, the members recommended that a more subdued color than the bright green proposed, be used, and suggested a walnut-twill texture be used for the panels and an enamelled finish in beige-lotus cream for the muntins and mullions. The architect agreed to make revisions to the design for future presentation.

Meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

L.R. Wilson, Secretary

15 May 1956

Mr. Fernleigh R. Graninger, Chief
Division of Visual Services
Department of State
2045 State Annex No. 3
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Graninger:

At a meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts held on 10 May 1956, the members of the Commission considered the drawing of the design for a proposed lapel button for use by the Diplomatic Courier Service. They agreed they could not approve the design because it is too fine in detail, the map in the center being so small as to be practically meaningless. This decision confirms the opinion Mr. Felix W. de Weldon gave you at the informal meeting held in this office on 19 March 1956.

It is recommended that the problem be submitted to the Heraldic Branch, Office of the Quartermaster General, Department of the Army, for assistance in getting the best possible design.

The photostat of the design is being retained for our files. Your other designs are being returned herewith. If I can be of further help, please let me know. The next meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts will be 14 June 1956.

Sincerely yours,

L. R. Wilson
Secretary

Enclosure

cc to: Heraldic Branch
Office of QMG
Dept. of Army

Exhibit A

11 May 1994

Mr. Randolph E. Pendleton, CPAE
Division of Visual Services
Department of Radio
City Hall Annex Rm. 3
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pendleton:

It a meeting of the Committee of Five held on 10 May 1994, the members of the Committee considered the design of the display for a proposed Legal Exhibit for use by the Corporate Counsel Services. They agreed that should the opening the Exhibit be in San Jose it should, too, be in Los Angeles being as small as to be practically inoperative. This decision modifies the opinion of Mr. Wells to do duplex work at the Internal Meeting held in late October or in March 1994.

It is recommended that the problem be submitted to the Executive Director, Office of the Corporation Counsel, Department of the Army, for assistance in getting the task completed.

The placement of the display is being considered for the future. Some of the designs are being reviewed currently. It may be of Congress help please let me know. The next meeting of the Committee of Five will be in June 1994.

Sincerely yours,

L. E. Wilson
Secretary

Enclosure

cc Mr. Randolph Pendl
Office of CPA
Dept. of Army

15 May 1956

Mr. Joseph Nebesky, Chief
Graphics Branch, Room 320
International Cooperation Administration
815 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Nebesky:

At a meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts held on 10 May 1956, the members of the Commission of Fine Arts were glad to consider the designs you submitted for the International Cooperation Administration's award emblem for 10, 20, and 30 years of service. None of the designs, in their opinion, possessed sufficient artistic merit to be recommended for the use of your Agency.

The members of the Commission fully realize that you are pressed for time, but they strongly urge that you submit your problem to the Heraldic Branch, Office of the Quartermaster General, Department of the Army, for assistance in getting the best possible design. Mr. Arthur E. DuBois, Technical Director, Heraldic Branch, has stated that he will be glad to study your requirements. We hope he will have a design ready for submission at the next meeting of the Commission on 14 June 1956.

Your designs are being returned herewith. If I can be of further assistance, please call me.

Sincerely yours,

L. R. Wilson
Secretary

Enclosure

cc to: Heraldic Branch
Office of QMG
Dept. of Army

Exhibit B

15 May 1956

Lt. Col. James S. Cook, Jr.
Chief, Heraldic Branch
Office of the Quartermaster General
Department of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Colonel Cook:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts were glad to meet with you, Mr. Arthur E. DuBois, and Mr. Thomas Hudson Jones, at their meeting on 10 May 1956; and to have you present the finely executed models for the obverse and reverses of the Atomic Energy Commission Medals for Distinguished Service, and Outstanding Service.

They recognize the difficulty in achieving an artistic synthesis from the extensive specifications which the Atomic Energy Commission desired. After careful study, they considered the design of the obverse was overburdened with detail that confused the composition and would largely be lost when reduced to the size of the finished medal. They suggest that all the symbolic material be restricted to the globe and the atomic diagram that surrounds. They also preferred a round globe to the flattened spheroid on the submitted model. The ribbon containing the motto could then be raised and given more space around it. The reverse of the medal, while crowded with lettering, is satisfactory.

I have relayed the gist of this letter to Mr. Hamers of the Atomic Energy Commission, who called me this morning. He is anxious to have the obverse restudied in time for the next meeting of the Commission on 14 June 1956.

Sincerely yours,

L. R. Wilson
Secretary

Exhibit C

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14 June 1956

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C., 14 JUNE 1956

9:00 A.M.

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The meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts was held in its offices in the Interior Department Building on 14 June 1956, with the following members in attendance:

Mr. Felix de Weldon
Mr. Wallace Harrison
Mrs. William Muir
Mr. Douglas Orr
Mr. Elbert Peets
Mr. William Perry

In the unexpected absence of the Chairman, Mr. Peets was chosen by the members to serve as Chairman until Mr. Orr, the Vice Chairman, arrived and took over the Chair at 9:30. (Mr. L. R. Wilson, Secretary, was also present).

1. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: The 13th and 14th of September,1956, were chosen as the dates for the next meeting of the Commission, omitting the meetings in July and August.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS. Mr. Hunter and Mr. Poorman explained the background of the problem as it had been proposed in a letter from Congressman Oliver Bolton of Ohio, to Mr. Floete, the Administrator of General Services Administration. Mr. Bolton, accompanied by Mr. Theis, attended the meeting and listened to the explanation of the representatives of the General Services Administration. A pamphlet indicating three schemes, by which Government buildings could

be readily marked was presented for consideration. The General Services Administration favored a scheme which involved the placing of bronze letters on the lower part of the building near the entrance. An alternate scheme involved placing the desired lettering on comparatively small standards to be set on the steps, or adjacent to the entrance of the building. Either of these schemes seemed to be more flexible than carving the lettering into the stone of the wall.

The members of the Commission discussed each of the schemes and there was general agreement with the position taken by the General Services Administration. Mr. Bolton expressed himself as being pleased with the solution that had been proposed and the members of the Commission posed no objection to General Services Administration's proceeding to mark buildings in accordance with the above proposals without further reference to the Commission. It was agreed to write a letter to the General Services Administration incorporating these views and to send a copy of the letter to Congressman Bolton.

3. PROPOSED ARMED FORCES INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE AT FORT McNAIR. The representatives of the District Engineer's Office, the Army Corps of Engineers and the architect presented drawings for a scheme to erect a permanent building to house the Armed Forces Industrial College on a site adjacent to the War College Building and facing the parade grounds at Fort Lesley J. McNair. The design of the building was explained by the project architect, Mr. Anthony F. Harrer of the firm of Ronald S. Senseman. Mr. Harrer explained that the architects were

deeply conscious of the subordinate architectural character the new building should have as a neighbor of the large War College building, a monumental structure completed in 1907 from designs by the architects McKim, Mead and White in the Roman classical tradition for which this firm was noted. The members of the Commission discussed in turn problems which they considered important to a proper solution of this problem. They recalled that the plan of Fort McNair was designed in a monumental spirit, which, with its long central parade ground, recalled the monumental plan of the Mall and that the composition of the War College plan was intended to fit in harmoniously with the layout of the Capital City. The scale of the War College Building made the scale of any building erected later a matter of utmost importance, together with proper choice of materials and suitable architectural details. Mr. Harrer and the representatives of the War College were most sympathetic to the views expressed by the Commission and stated they would restudy the design and incorporate the suggestions. They indicated that there was some need for speed in getting the building started, and it was decided that, as soon as a new version of the design had been completed, it should be presented to the members of the Commission for study by mail or by private conference.

4. DESIGN OF MEMORIAL TO GENERAL JOHN J. PERSHING. Mr. John Harbeson and Colonel Charles B. Shaw appeared for the American Battle Monuments Commission and presented a design for a memorial to General Pershing, in accordance with legislation passed at the session of Congress directing the American Battle Monuments Commission to explore the problem. The site tentatively chosen for the memorial was the Pennsylvania Avenue site

at Fourteenth Street, which was until recently the location for a temporary building. The members of the Commission recalled that this site has for many years been earmarked as a site for a memorial fountain or some other low monument, which would not conflict with the Commerce Department to the South, the Sherman statue to the West or with the South portico of the Treasury Department. Mr. Harbeson explained that this site had been favored by members of the American Battle Monuments Commission above all others during their last meeting, but that he believed other sites might be utilized if the Commission of Fine Arts opposed putting the Pershing memorial here. The design of the memorial as presented and described by Mr. Harbeson comprised a figure of General Pershing silhouetted against an architectural background, decorated with stone maps and other historical data explaining the campaigns in which the General had taken a commanding part. The members of the Commission of Fine Arts found much merit in the design, but stated that, in their opinion, the site at Pennsylvania Avenue was not entirely appropriate for a monument which seemed to have primarily the character of a shrine rather than a monument to mark an important civic location such as this. They considered that a more quiet spot was required for the monument projected by Mr. Harbeson's design, and they emphasized their opinion that whatever goes into this site should have more the character of a civic monument such as a fountain, which would harmonize with the vista of Pennsylvania Avenue and be a suitable termination point for it. The question was asked whether the American Battle Monuments Commission would reconsider a fountain as being a suitable memorial for General

Pershing. Mr. Harbeson said that he would restudy the problem in the light of these remarks and would return the design later for further consultation on the matter. The legislation merely authorized the American Battle Monuments Commission to study the problem, and if they could arrive at a suitable design and site for a monument to report its findings on site and design to Congress. A letter was written to General Thomas North, Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission, advising him of the suggestions made by the Commission. (Exhibit A).

5. CHANGES IN EAST FRONT OF THE CAPITOL. Mr. Perry asked permission to speak about the changes in the East Front of the Capitol, although the Commission of Fine Arts is not directly concerned with it. He related that he had personally made some studies, and that it seemed logical to him that the space requirements which motivated the proposed change could equally well be met by an expansion in the lower part of the West side. He had made some drawings and stated that he would send copies of them to each of the members for a study during the course of next week. All the members of the Commission seemed to believe that anything that could be done to keep the East Front of the Capitol intact would be worthwhile considering. No further action was taken on this matter at this time.

6. JOINT MEETING WITH NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION. At 11 o'clock the Commission recessed and re-assembled for a joint meeting with the National Capital Planning Commission. Five items were scheduled to be taken up with the National Capital Planning Commission.

In addition to the members of the Commission of Fine Arts listed on the first page of these minutes, those attending the joint session included the following members of the National Capital Planning Commission:

Mr. Harland Bartholomew, Chairman
Mr. John A. Remon, Vice Chairman
Brig. Gen. Walter K. Wilson, Jr., representing the Chief of Engineers, U. S. A.
Colonel Thomas B. Hunter, representing Engineer Commissioner, D. C.
Mr. Edward J. Kelly, representing the Director, National Park Service
Mr. F. Moran McConihe, Commissioner of Public Buildings
Mr. Harold J. Spelman, representing Commissioner of Public Roads
Dr. Joseph D. Lohman
Mr. Claude W. Owen

National Capital Planning Commission staff members present included:

Mr. John Nolen, Jr., Director
Mr. Donald J. Chaney, General Counsel and Secretary
Mr. Charles H. Conrad, Chief of General Plans
Mr. Ray M. Schenck, Chief of Projects and Design
Mr. Ellis F. Price, Assistant Chief, Projects and Design
Mrs. F. F. J. Block, Landscape Architect

(a) DESIGN OF MEMORIAL TO GENERAL JOHN J. PERSHING. The Chairman welcomed the members of the Commission of Fine Arts and invited comments on the Pershing Memorial proposal. Dr. Orr stated that a preliminary meeting had been held with Colonel Charles B. Shaw and Mr. John Harbeson on the Pershing Memorial and the Commission of Fine Arts had made certain suggestions on the design for the proposed location on the triangle at 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. Mr. Nolen then was requested to proceed with the discussion and also read the following excerpts from a letter to the Chairman of the Planning Commission from Brig. Gen. Thomas North, Secretary of the Battle Monuments Commission:

"S.J. 95, enacted recently, directs the American Battle Monuments Commission to prepare plans and estimates for the erection of a suitable memorial to General John J. Pershing, together with recommendations with respect to site, design, and materials for submission to the Congress at as early a date as practicable.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"In the view of the Commission the most appropriate site for such a memorial, both because of its intrinsic interest and also because of the sentimental relationship of General Pershing with this part of the city, would be the triangle between the Willard Hotel and the Department of Commerce, bounded on the other sides by 14th and 15th streets. Much of the triangle, of course, would remain in grass, trees, and shrubbery.

"The Commission had instructed me to present these views to your Commission, with the request that if it meets with your approval, the site be held for the purpose until the plans and estimates can be submitted for the approval of the Congress and the necessary funds appropriated. It hopes to accomplish the first step before the end of the present session."

Mr. Nolen advised that as a result of the letter, a rather extensive study of the background relating to the proposed site had been made by the staff, particularly Mrs. Block who then was requested to review both the background and the possible utilization of the area for the Pershing Memorial and other purposes.

Mrs. Block traced the history of the triangle and its place in history, pointing out that the triangle is part of the terminus of the most famous mile in America, and the dignity of this avenue demands something here that is worthwhile and satisfactory from the design and civic point of view. A number of means by which this objective could be obtained were outlined in some detail.

The Chairman inquired as to whether it had been definitely decided that the Triangle building plan would be carried out to include

removal of the municipal building and Old Southern Railway Building, and was advised that it had been authorized by Congress although no money had ever been appropriated. The Chairman also noted that in planning for the use of this Triangle, careful consideration should be given to the impact of traffic on E Street at such time as the Constitution Avenue bridge was completed. Dr. Lohman suggested that all of the suggested treatments of the Triangle had merit and it was not necessary to eliminate public building use, open park use, or a proper respect for the traffic problem. The Chairman also pointed out that the mass transportation study might result in the choice of this area as an accommodation for a subsurface facility. On an inquiry from the Chairman, it was noted that General North had requested a positive action on the part of the Commission, but Mr. Orr felt that no one was in a position to make any positive recommendation at this time. Mr. Kelly then reminded the Commission that the National Park Service had had under consideration the possibility of having within the Triangle a visitors' reception center which he felt would be quite in harmony with the park character of the area. Mr. Remon agreed with the previous suggestion that the Commission was not in a position to take any positive action and the Commission decided to take no action at this time.

(b) LOCATION FOR COURT OF CLAIMS BUILDING. The Chairman referred to a meeting on June 13th with representatives of the Planning Commission, the Commission of Fine Arts, the Bureau of the Budget, and the General Services Administration, for the purpose of considering a location for a new building for the Court of Claims and requested

Mr. Nolen to report on that meeting. Mr. Nolen stated that agreement had been reached that the ideal site for the Court of Claims was the square northeast of the Supreme Court Building bounded on the west by 2nd Street, on the east by 3rd Street, and running south from Constitution Avenue to A Street, N.E. The Chairman then referred to previous discussions regarding the possible use of a location in Judiciary Square, or, again, in the square where the Court of Claims is now located by incorporating the court in a building that might occupy the entire block. Mr. Remon inquired as to whether the location near the Supreme Court fitted in with the plans of the Architect of the Capitol and was assured that it did. Members of the Fine Arts Commission were asked to express their views and each member present stated that he was in favor of the proposed location. Thereupon, the Commission adopted the following resolution:

> MOTION Unanimously carried recommending the location for a new Court of Claims building be the square or block bounded by 2nd Street, Constitution Avenue, 3rd Street and A Street, N.E.

(c) PROPOSED PRIVATELY-OWNED BUILDING ON JACKSON PLACE (SQUARE 167) FACING LAFAYETTE SQUARE

Mr. Nolen referred to the action of the Commission at its April meeting in recommending to the General Services Administration, or other appropriate agency, that the balance of the property in this square (167) and now privately owned, be acquired so as to carry out the original recommendations of this Commission and of the Fine Arts Commission, and called attention to a proposal for a building on a part

of the privately-owned area. Mr. Wilson of the Commission of Fine Arts indicated the necessity of considering the matter again at this time as arising from a proposal submitted to the Commission of Fine Arts for approval of a design of a building to be constructed in this area by private interests. After a general discussion, the Commission took the following action:

> MOTION unanimously carried that the Commission call the attention of the Bureau of the Budget to the possibility of immediate and extensive development by private interests of the east half of Square 167, facing Lafayette Square, and urge again that appropriate action be taken to authorize its acquisition for Federal purposes, so as to preclude proposed private use which might operate to the detriment of the public interest.

(d) REPORT ON TUNNEL-BRIDGE BILLS HEARING. The Chairman reported that he had attended a hearing before the House Committee on the District of Columbia and had advised with regard to the position of the Commission on the construction of a tunnel as against the construction of a bridge. He also furnished the Committee with his own views on the impact of the traffic that would come into the northwest area from a new crossing of the Potomac and expressed the view that a six-lane crossing would result in a terrific traffic problem. There followed a discussion of the various costs involved in connection with the construction of a four-lane tunnel as against a six-lane bridge or a four-lane bridge. Colonel Hunter also was of the view that the Planning Commission had already approved a six-lane bridge as well as the location of the bridge. Mr. Orr of the Commission of Fine Arts stated that his Commission had agreed on the general design for the bridge although it was felt that there was no place for resulting traffic.

(e) MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND TECHNOLOGY. Mr. Nolen reported that the Congress had appropriated money for the development of plans for the Smithsonian Museum of History and Technology fronting on Constitution Avenue between 12th and 14th Streets, and that the Public Buildings Service had developed sketches of the proposed construction and now would like to have informal approval of their general proposal. Mr. Hunter of the Public Buildings Service displayed models that had been prepared by the architectural consultants, McKim, Mead and White, and discussed them in detail, particularly with respect to the relationship of the new building to existing building lines and the general mall perspective. Some of these same features were discussed in detail by members of both Commissions present and it was generally agreed that the proposed structure conformed nicely to the accepted planning of the area. Upon request of the architectural consultants, McKim, Mead and White, the Commission expressed the opinion that the studies as presented were in general accord with the Mall development plan and should be continued.

7. ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL, (Preliminary revised design). At 12:30 o'clock the members re-assembled in the Conference Room of the Commission of Fine Arts to consider revised drawings for St. John's College High School which overlooks Rock Creek Park and will eventually come to the Commission from the District of Columbia Commissioners for approval of a building permit, by authority of the Shipstead-Luce Act. The architects had brought in drawings at the May meeting in a preliminary submission, and were now ready to show the revisions which had resulted from the previous conference with the Commission. The architects presented a new series of drawings which enabled the members of the Commission to see the overall relationships of the various parts of the design and they were able to note how the architects would be able to unify certain details in respect to the overall window scheme and to the main entrance, that the Commission had found troublesome in the previous submission. In general, the Commission believed that the architects had successfully met the problem and that further submission of the design is unnecessary.

At 1 o'clock the Commission recessed and proceeded to the National Gallery of Art for lunch. Mr. Edmund Purves, Executive Director of the American Institute of Architects met them there at the Commission's invitation. During the course of the luncheon, two items of business were discussed with Mr. Purves. The first involved a resolution of the Board of the American Institute of Architects to have the enabling legislation of the Commission of Fine Arts amended to give it veto power or approval power of buildings and other structures that come

under its jurisdiction instead of the advisory power that the law authorizes. The members of the Commission told Mr. Purves that, in their opinion, such an amendment was not desirable or necessary. The second item involved plans projected by the American Institute of Architects for the Commission of Fine Arts to participate in one of the meetings that the American Institute of Architects is planning for its centennial celebration in May 1957. The members of the Commission expressed their desire to participate. Mr. Purves said that he would follow up on both matters with the Board of the Institute and would communicate further with us.

8. PUBLIC BUILDINGS SERVICE SUBMISSIONS. The Commission reassembled in the Conference Room at 2:15 o'clock to consider projects submitted by the Public Buildings Service.

(a) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND TECHNOLOGY.

The first design presented was the Smithsonian Institution Museum of History and Technology. Representatives of both the Public Buildings Service and the architects, McKim, Mead and White, and Mills, Petticord and Mills, were present. They reported that they had during the morning met with the Joint Congressional Committee on the Museum and, as a result, they had narrowed the number of schemes for the new building to two. The members of the Commission emphasized the great importance they attached to attaining the proper scale for this building in view of its proximity to the Triangle Buildings on Constitution Avenue, to the Mall and to the Washington Monument. They believed that the relationship to the buildings on Constitution Avenue

was the least important. The relationship to the expansion of the Natural History Building which adjoins it to the East was also discussed. One scheme for the design of this building developed a so-called platform type design in which the base of the building was considerably expanded and the central bulk of the building accordingly appeared above the level of the Mall reduced in size and scale. This scheme had been favored by the meeting with the Joint Committee during the morning. The Commission of Fine Arts agreed that they preferred the platform type design to the other, which seemed to rise with greater bulk and with greater contrast to the scale of the surrounding buildings, especially from the street level. The architects stated that they believed the discussion had provided them with enough expression of opinion to clarify the Commission's desire and that they would restudy it in light of the comments made. They wished, however, that some discussion of the revised design could be held before the next meeting of the Commission in September. It was accordingly agreed to meet about the middle of July, on a date to be confirmed later, in New York where the three architect members of the Commission would go for a conference. The secretary was instructed to make these arrangements and to advise the Public Buildings Service when this meeting would be held.

(b) DEPARTMENT OF STATE. The architects and representatives of the Public Buildings Service presented a new series of drawings for the building. These designs incorporated suggested revisions made to the architects at a meeting held in the office of Mr. Harrison in New York on 4 June. The greatest of these changes involved giving up

the attempt to make an architectural juncture between the existing building and the new parts of the expanded building. It was generally agreed that the separation of the two structures would aid in solving the design problem which did not readily seem to have any acceptable solution. The new designs presented seemed to confirm these views. All agreed that the facades now seemed to be progressing to a point that would be satisfactory for the final development. The 21st Street facade, the C Street facade, and the 23rd Street facade were, in general, satisfactory. But the Commission felt that the E Street facade should be restudied to express a franker break with the old building.

(c) POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT PARKING SPACE in the hemicycle of the Great Plaza and vehicular access on the 12th Street Court

Mr. Hunter of the General Services Administration presented the plans which his agency had drawn up after the members of the Commission conferred, during the May meeting, with them and officials of the Post Office Department on this project. At that time, the Commission had agreed to a modified system of parking and access on the 12th Street side for the exclusive use of the Postmaster General and important visitors to the Post Office Department. This involved making a narrow access street 10 feet wide next to the building for the use of one car at a time and with parking facilities for no more than two cars. The drawings which Mr. Hunter presented were approved in general for this access. Appropriate landscaping was also stipulated. On the Great Plaza side the drawings showed space for parking 41 cars where a

grass plot had previously existed. This access was granted specifically with the proviso that the Post Office Department would join us and the General Services Administration in plans to rehabilitate the Great Plaza area by removing the commercial parking concession from this area and developing it in accordance with the long-standing landscape plans which were formulated at the time the Great Plaza was designed as part of the Triangle development. It was further noted on the plans that the South interior court of the Post Office Department was also being developed for parking. This involved removing the circular grass plot and granite fountain that were a part of the original building design. For this reason the Commission gave Mr. Hunter their opinion that the authority of the General Services Administration did not extend to the destruction of this court and they requested that this part of the parking plan be reconsidered and arranged in some other way. Mr. Hunter said that he would proceed on the basis of these decisions and no further submission of the project was deemed necessary.

(d) DRAFT LEGISLATION REGARDING FUNDS FOR DECORATION IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Mr. Hunter also presented the draft for a bill to be presented in the next Congress which would provide funds for murals and sculpture in public buildings that will be built for the Government. In accordance with our previous discussions on this problem, the legislation set up a fund which would be administered jointly by the Commission of Fine Arts and the Public Buildings Service for the purpose intended. Mr. Hunter said that the amount of this fund was not yet determined and that he would have to supply it. The matter was left in this

somewhat unfinished stage with the understanding that the matter would be explored further and perfected in time for Congressional action in January. (Exhibit B).

9. ATOMIC ENERGY MEDAL, REVISED DESIGN, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY.

Lieut. Col. James S. Cook, Jr., Chief, and Mr. Arthur E. DuBois, Technical Director of the Heraldic Branch, Mr. Thomas Hudson Jones, sculptor, and Mr. Charles W. Immler, Architect-Engineer, Atomic Energy Commission, presented a revised model of the Atomic Energy Medal which now embodied most of the suggestions made by the Commission of Fine Arts at the previous meeting. All the symbolic material in the background had not been deleted, however, and the representation of the Nike still remained because the Atomic Energy officials believed they needed this to make their medal distinctive. The members of the Commission demurred somewhat on the advisability of including such a weapon in the insignia of the Atomic Energy Commission, but on the insistence of Mr. Immler they decided to approve the medal as it was presented.

10. SCHOOL FOR CRIPPLED CHILDREN, 13th and Upshur Streets. The Secretary presented to the Commission drawings submitted by the District of Columbia Supervising Architect for a new building to be used as a health school at 13th and Upshur Streets, northwest. The plans and elevation were in sketch form at small scale and were presented primarily for preliminary information to the Commission and for any suggestions they wished to make. A perspective drawing showed the building to be a one-story flat-roofed brick building of plain block design. The members noted that there were several interior rooms

with no outside lighting, and it was suggested that, if space conditions permitted, a more open plan be studied. The facades were indicated as being red brick, which the Commission considered satisfactory but they recommended that the limestone trim which framed the windows into long bands might well be omitted in any further development of the design. The decision of the Commission was to have the Secretary convey the suggestions verbally to Mr. Coe and to extend an invitation to submit the final drawings when they were ready.

11. FIRST DIVISION MEMORIAL DESIGN. The Secretary explained to the Commission that the National Capital Parks had requested Colonel Shepard, the architect of the First Division Memorial, to make some changes in the design which the Commission had approved previously. The major change involved location of a large map showing the area of the First Division's engagements during World War II, and, in the approved plan, faced 17th Street. The suggested changes involved turning the map to the east side of the wall so that it faced the Memorial column rather than the street. It was pointed out during the discussion that the criticism of the design of the monument was the function of the Commission of Fine Arts and not the National Capital Parks, but there was no objection to the transfer of the map to the other side of the wall. The Secretary was instructed to notify Colonel Shepard of this decision.

12. POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT - LABOR DAY STAMP. The Secretary then advised the Commission that Mr. Robertson of the Post Office Department had requested assistance in finding an artist who could assist them in

the design of a Labor Day Stamp. It had originally been decided by the Post Office Department and the Labor Department that they would use a photograph selected from the photographic exhibition called "The History of Man", and permission had been requested and granted to do so. When the model of the stamp had been made up, the design found very little acceptance from anyone and the Post Office Department was faced with the problem of redesigning the stamp. The Secretary contacted Mrs. Muir who recommended Mr. Richard Lahey and Mrs. Dorothy Van Winkle as artists in this area who might be willing to assist Mr. Robertson. Mr. Lahey was consulted and agreed to make sketch designs for the stamp. In several meetings with Mr. Robertson, one of the designs was chosen and developed further. Unfortunately, it was not possible to get the design or a photograph of it to show what had been done. (Exhibit C).

13. LEGISLATION

Reports on legislation were considered as follows:

H.R. 10970 - 84th Congress, a bill "To direct the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to proceed with the acquisition of works of art as authorized by the joint resolution of May 17,1938, and to provide for the display of such works of art in galleries and museums throughout the United States."

H.R. 10209 - 84th Congress, a bill "To amend the Act of August 30, 1954, to authorize and direct the construction of bridges over the Potomac River, and for other purposes."

H.R. 11164 - 84th Congress, a bill "To provide for the construction, equipment, and furnishing of a new building for the United States Court of Claims."

S.3419 - 84th Congress, an act "to provide for the establishment of a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts, and for other purposes."

14. SHIPSTEAD-LUCE SUBMISSIONS, Preliminary

People's Life Insurance Company Building at Virginia and New Hampshire Avenues

The architects of the project and the president and other officials of the People's Life Insurance Company presented the preliminary drawings for a headquarters building for this Company at the above site. It was recalled in reviewing the design that although this particular square (#19) in the so-called government-taking area, was zoned residential, it had been rezoned by District officials for commercial use at the request of the People's Life Insurance Company. It was also noted that here was another instance of the failure of government agencies to press for the purchase of areas after they have been assigned for government use until it is too late to acquire the land without condemnation procedures.

The design presented by the architects was a white marble structure of semi-governmental character with a central motif composed of marble piers. The architects stressed the point that this design was not to be considered as final, but merely an indication of the way their present thinking was running, and to determine whether the Commission of Fine Arts had any advice to offer at an early stage. The members of the Commission expressed their general approval of the design and invited the architects to return with revised designs when they had been further developed.

15. SHIPSTEAD-LUCE SUBMISSIONS, Formal.

(a) D.J. Kaufman, Inc., 1005 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Developments in the plans to reface the facade of this old five-story building with new materials were presented for review by the Secretary, who had worked with the architect to bring the design in such a manner as to conform better with the Department of Justice which faces it across Pennsylvania Avenue. The changes primarily involved the color and texture of the material to be used rather than any change in the basic concept of the design. The architect had agreed to substitute walnut spandrelite in buff aluminum framework for green spandrels in polished aluminum framework. The members of the Commission agreed that the colors were now satisfactory and that there was no further objection to approving the application for a building permit (SL 1858, dated 15 June 1956).

(b) Additional Shipstead-Luce Submissions are listed in Exhibit H.

16. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT

(a) Constitution Avenue Bridge/Tunnel legislation

Representatives of the District of Columbia Government were to have been present at this meeting to discuss matters concerning the Constitution Avenue Bridge and Tunnel amendments, but pressure of business in the ending days of Congress forced them to cancel their appointment. The Secretary related that he and the Chairman had attended the hearing of the bridge/tunnel amendments (H.R. 7472 and H.R.10209) at 10 o'clock on 13 June. At this hearing, the Chairman made a statement which summarized the position of the Commission of Fine Arts up to this time,

copy of which is appended as Exhibit I. At this same hearing Mr. Ole Singstad, an engineer and noted tunnel designer, at the request of the Interior Department, expressed the arguments for a tunnel at the Constitution Avenue location instead of a bridge. Other witnesses also expressed views favoring a tunnel. No indication of which way the subcommittee would act regarding the tunnel amendment was given at the time of the hearing. The Secretary stated that he would advise the members when the decision was known.

(b) Street Light Standards for the District of Columbia.

At the May meeting, the members of the Commission had discussed at some length the introduction by the District Highway Department of more highway-type light standards into the monumental areas of Washington. In fact, on that day, lights had been installed around the Daughters of the American Revolution building which faces the Ellipse and adjoins the Interior building to the East between C and D Streets. Following the meeting the Chairman sent a letter to the Engineer Commissioner calling attention to the fact that these standards had been set up without notice and that the Commission of Fine Arts believed this to be a matter which affected them in their capacity as advisors for projects which determined the appearance of the city of Washington. The Secretary read the letter and the members of the Commission expressed their approval of the action which had been taken and of the position which had been outlined for the Commission on this subject. The Chairman's letter is appended as Exhibit J.

17. EXECUTIVE ORDER FOR THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS. The members of the Commission all again emphatically expressed their desire to have a current Executive Order for the Commission which would outline the Commission's responsibility in the problems that are now under discussion in Washington. The Secretary explained that the draft that was being studied, had been considered to be too long and too stereotyped, and that an effort was being made to shorten the text and to bring it into some similarity with previous Orders, without sacrificing any of the desirable features that were incorporated in it. The Secretary also stated that he and the Chairman were prepared to take steps to have the draft acted on by the President's Office as soon as an acceptable text could be arrived at.

18. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LIFE UNDERWRITERS BUILDING. The Secretary then outlined for the members of the Commission the present status of the attempt to solve the matter of space for re-location of the National Association of Life Underwriters building in Square #62. At a joint meeting with the National Capital Planning Commission and the Public Buildings Service, representatives of the National Association of Life Underwriters and the American Pharmaceutical Association, it had finally been agreed to request a supplementary appropriation to enable the Public Buildings Service to acquire the Conger Laundry property, on the Northwest corner of Square #62. Such acquisition would permit an arrangement whereby the National Association of Life Underwriters building could be moved to the center of the northern perimeter of Square #62, and thus located in a position which harmonized with the American Pharmaceutical Association building and with the southern

facade of the new State Department building. Supplementary appropriations for this purpose have been emphatically refused during the closing days of the 84th Congress. On the 7th of June, the Chairman and the Secretary attended a hearing before the House Appropriations subcommittee, where the matter was reopened. Representatives of all the interested agencies attended and testified in favor of this appropriation. The Chairman stressed especially the harm that would result to the harmonious development of the plan of the city in this area. The members of the Commission expressed their approval with the action that had been taken in this matter.

19. RED CROSS MEMORIAL TO HEROIC DEAD. The Secretary read a letter from Mr. Ellsworth Bunker, President, The American National Red Cross, in which plans for a memorial in memory of the men and women who have given their lives in the service of the American Red Cross (Exhibit K). Mr. de Weldon presented photographs of his sketch model and showed how he planned to locate it in the court at the interior of the square which the Red Cross occupies facing the Ellipse between D and E Streets, N.W. The composition consists of three life-size bronze figures. It will stand opposite and balance the Clara Barton Memorial and will blend into the existing landscaping which is very handsome. The Commission approved the sketch as presented and a letter was sent to the President of the Red Cross embodying these views (Exhibit L).

Meeting adjourned.

L. R. Wilson
Executive Secretary

C O P Y

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
7000 INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

23 August 1956

Dear General North:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts were glad to have Mr. Harbeson and Colonel Shaw meet with them on 14 June 1956, and to have Mr. Harbeson present preliminary drawings for a proposed memorial to General of the Armies, John J. Pershing as authorized in H. J. Res. 537-84th Congress.

After studying the drawings, the members of the Commission complimented Mr. Harbeson on the simplicity and dignity of design of the projected Memorial and its landscaping. They had some questions, however, as to the suitability of the design, as presented, for Square 226 at Pennsylvania Avenue and 14th Street, a site which marks the end of the long vista, leading from the Capitol to the Treasury and the White House Grounds, and is accordingly an important center of activity of the daily and ceremonial life of the Capital. The orientation of the proposed design and the contemplative mood it invoked did not seem to the members to be as appropriate for the site as a fountain or some other feature of civic art would be. Mr. Harbeson said he would carry these ideas back to the American Battle Monuments Commission and would ascertain its views on restudying the proposed Memorial in a form that will more clearly recognize the monumental character of the site in the plan of Washington.

Later in the day, meeting in joint session with the National Capital Planning Commission, it was agreed to defer action on locating the Pershing Memorial on this important site until an exploratory study could be made of the relative merits of various other proposals for the use of the same area.

The Commission will hold its next meeting on 13 and 14 September 1956, and we will be glad to confer further with you on the matter.

Sincerely yours,
Sgd.
L. R. Wilson
Executive Secretary

Major General Thomas North
Secretary
American Battle Monuments Commission
Room 2080, Navy Department
Washington 25, D. C.

cc- Mr. Harbeson

EXHIBIT A

[illegible]

June 1,1956

Draft Legislation
Regarding Funds for Decoration in Public Buildings

The Administrator of General Services is authorized to establish a Fine Arts Fund, which shall be available without fiscal year limitation, to be expended at his discretion and with the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts, for suitable murals, sculpture and other decorative art in public buildings designed and constructed under his supervision. There is authorized to be appropriated to said fund an amount not to exceed $_____: Provided, That such fund shall be in addition to any appropriation for the design and construction of public buildings or otherwise provided to General Services Administration or any other agency.

EXHIBIT B

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
7000 INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

July 3,1956

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your Committee has requested a report on H. R. 10970, a bill "To direct the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to proceed with the acquisition of works of art as authorized by the joint resolution of May 17,1938, and to provide for the display of such works of art in galleries and museums throughout the United States."

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts have previously expressed, in reports to your Committee on H.R.4307 and H.R. 7974-84th Congress, their views that proper housing of the National Collection of Fine Arts in its own building is desirable at the earliest practicable date that appropriations for such a building will fit into the plans of the President and the Congress.

At a meeting on 14 June 1956, H.R. 10970 was discussed, but the members felt that they were not in a position to comment further on the provisions of H. R. 10970, which pertain specifically to the operations of the Smithsonian Institution.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the submission of this report to your Committee.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

by L. R. Wilson
Secretary

Hon. Omar Burleson, Chairman
Committee on House Administration
G-53 Capitol Building
Washington, D. C.

Exhibit D

C O P Y

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
7000 INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

June 14, 1956

Dear Mr. Jones:

Your letter of May 11, 1956 requested the views of the Commission of Fine Arts with respect to H. R. 10209, a bill "to amend the Act of August 30, 1954, to authorize and direct the construction of bridges over the Potomac River, and for other purposes."

The purpose of this legislation is to substitute a four-lane tunnel for the six-lane bridge that was suthorized in the vicinity of Constitution Avenue by Public Law 704-83rd Congress. Preceding the passage of this law, and since that time, the Commission of Fine Arts has not ceased to point out the impending threat any river crossing in this area will hold to the landscape and the memorials that have been built and are projected there. A bridge on the site authorized by Public Law 704 would be the most destructive, because it would absolutely nullify the harmonious relationship of the Lincoln Memorial and the Memorial Bridge with the other memorials in this landscape. Moving the crossing site northward to the southern tip of Roosevelt Island would alleviate the damage to a degree, but each of the bridge schemes carries with it the unsolved problem of how to crowd the required approaches on both sides of the river into an area that is too small to accommodate them. A tunnel will be the least objectionable solution because it will preserve the river view intact; but it also requires a complex of approach lanes, although to a lesser degree than a bridge. It is the confirmed conviction of the Commission of Fine Arts that transfer of the crossing to another site is the only way to avoid this deliberate annihilation of all or part of the most beautiful civic landscape in the United States. However, if there is to be a crossing, the tunnel is by far the least objectionable solution from the viewpoint of the Commission of Fine Arts.

I am attaching to this letter a copy of the statement on the subject which the members of the Commission authorized me to make before the Committee of the District of Columbia of the House of Representatives at a hearing regarding this problem on June 13, 1956. This statement incorporates the studied views and deepest fears of the members of the Commission of Fine Arts, who have consistently and unanimously maintained them, because they believe that construction of a river crossing here will be a

EXHIBIT E

most regrettable error of judgment. If a bridge is built where presently authorized, posterity may justly say that this part of the Nation's birthright has been traded outright for a mess of traffic.

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
by
Sgd.
L. R. Wilson
Secretary

Mr. Roger W. Jones
Assistant Director
Legislative Reference
Bureau of theBudget
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure

84TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3419

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 6, 1956

Referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

AN ACT

To provide for the establishment of a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress hereby finds and declares, and it is the policy of the Congress in enacting this Act—

(1) that the growth and flourishing of the arts depend upon freedom, imagination, and individual initiative;

(2) that the encouragement of creative activity in the performance and practice of the arts, and of a widespread participation in and appreciation of the

I

EXHIBIT F

arts, is essential to the general welfare and the national interest,

(3) that as work days shorten and life expectancy lengthens, the arts will play an ever more important role in the lives of our citizens; and

(4) that the encouragement of the arts, while primarily a matter for private and local initiative, is an appropriate matter of concern to the United States Government.

SEC. 2. (a) There is hereby established in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the "Council"). The Council shall be composed of twenty-four members appointed by the President, from among private citizens of the United States who are widely recognized for their knowledge of or experience or profound interest in, one or more of the arts. Twenty-one of such members shall be representative of the following seven major art fields and each of the seven art fields shall have at least two representatives: music; drama and dance; literature; architecture and allied arts; painting, sculpture, graphic and craft arts, and photography; motion pictures; radio and television; and three members shall be persons who have been or are associated with organizations or institutions engaged in preserving, displaying, or advancing the arts, or promoting the

creation or understanding of the arts. In making such appointments the President shall give due consideration to a balance of representation from the seven major art fields, appropriate to the activities of the Council.

The term of office of each member of the Council shall be six years, except that the term of one-third of the members first appointed shall be for two years, one-third for four years, and one-third for six years. No member of the Council shall be eligible for reappointment during a two-year period following the expiration of his term. The terms of office shall begin for the first members of the Council on January 1, 1957.

The Council shall meet at the call of the Chairman or the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary"), but not less often than twice each calendar year. The President shall from time to time designate a member of the Council to be Chairman.

(b) The Council shall have an executive secretary who shall be appointed by the Secretary after consultations with the Council. Within the limits of appropriations available therefor, the Secretary shall also provide the Council, its executive secretary, and members of its special committees with necessary secretarial, clerical, and other staff assistance.

SEC. 3. A major duty of the Council shall be to recommend ways to maintain and increase the cultural resources

of the United States. A primary purpose of the Council is to propose methods to encourage private initiative and its cooperation with local, State, and Federal departments or agencies to foster artistic and cultural endeavors and the use of the arts both nationally and internationally in the best interests of our country, and to stimulate greater appreciation of the arts by our citizens.

To these ends, the Council shall undertake studies of, and make recommendations relating to, appropriate methods consistent with the policy set forth in the first section of this Act, for encouragement of creative activity in the performance and practice of the arts and of participation in and appreciation of the arts. Such studies shall be conducted by special committees of persons, expert in the field of art involved, appointed by the Secretary after consultation with the Council, which shall give due consideration to recommendations for nomination submitted by the established national organizations in such field of art. After considering reports on these studies, the Council shall make recommendations in writing to the Secretary. In the selection of subjects to be studied and in the formulations of recommendations, the

Council may obtain the advice of any interested and qualified persons and organizations.

SEC. 4. Members of the Council and members of special committees appointed pursuant to section 3, while attending meetings of the Council or while engaged in the conduct of studies hereunder, shall receive compensation at a rate to be fixed by the Secretary, but not exceeding $50 per diem, and shall be paid travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as authorized by law (5 U. S. C. 734–2) for persons in the Government service employed intermittently.

SEC. 5. (a) Any member of the Council or of a special committee, appointed under this Act, and any other person appointed, employed, or utilized in an advisory or consultative capacity under this Act is hereby exempted, with respect to such appointment, employment, or utilization, from the operation of sections 281, 283, 284, and 1914 of title 18 of the United States Code, except as otherwise specified in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) (1) The exemption granted by subsection (a) of this section shall not extend to the following acts performed as an officer or employee of the United States by any per-

son so appointed, employed, or utilized: (A) the negotiation or execution of, or (B) the making of any recommendation with respect to, or (C) the taking of any other action with respect to, any individual contract or other arrangement under this Act with the private employer of such person or any corporation, joint stock company, association, firm, partnership, or other business entity in the pecuniary profits or contracts of which such person has any direct or indirect interest.

(2) The exemption granted by subsection (a) of this section shall not, during the period of such appointment, employment, or utilization and the further period of two years after the termination thereof, extend to the prosecution or participiation in the prosecution, by any person so appointed, employed, or utilized, of any claim against the Government involving any individual contract or other arrangement entered into pursuant to this Act concerning which the appointee had any responsibility during the period of such appointment, employment, or utilization.

SEC. 6. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act, including expenses of professional, clerical, and stenographic assistance. Such appropriations shall be available for services as

authorized by section 15 of the Act of August 2, 1946 (5 U. S. C. 55a).

SEC. 7. This Act shall not be deemed to invalidate any provision in any Act of Congress or Executive order vesting authority in the Commission of Fine Arts.

Passed the Senate July 5 (legislative day, July 3), 1956.

Attest: FELTON M. JOHNSTON,

Secretary.

84TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3419

AN ACT

To provide for the establishment of a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts, and for other purposes.

JULY 6, 1956
Referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

P
Y

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
7000 INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING
Washington 25, D. C.

29 August 1956

Honorable Charles A. Buckley
Chairman, House Committee on Public Works
1304 New House Office Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your Committee has requested the views of the Commission of Fine Arts on H. R. 11164, a bill "To provide for the construction, equipment, and furnishing of a new building for the United States Court of Claims."

We have previously submitted reports on S. 3445 and H. R. 9873-84th Congress, in which we favored the erection of a new building for the Court of Claims in the neighborhood of Judiciary Square or the Supreme Court Building. At a hearing before the Senate Committee on Public Works on S.3445, the agencies concerned agreed to confer and work out plans for a suitable site. We understand that there is now full agreement on this matter. The Commission of Fine Arts is therefore on record as being favorably inclined to the provisions of Section 1-3 of H. R. 11164.

The disposition of the old building however is a matter on which we believe there is not enough information now available to make a decision. The deterioration of the building, both inside and out, has been stressed by all witnesses as an urgent cause for erecting a new building for the Court of Claims. The old building is said to possess fire, weather, and safety hazards, all of which are of prime importance in considering it for use in the display and storage of works of art. The long-range plans for the expansion of facilities for the Executive Branch include the use of the site. Also, the assignment of the responsibility to operate a municipal art gallery to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia is a matter that should not be entered into hastily. We believe therefore that Section 4 should be deleted from H. R11164. It might then be restudied and resubmitted as a separate piece of legislation, if warranted by the physical and administrative factors involved.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the submission of this report to your Committee.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

by L. R. Wilson
Secretary

EXHIBIT G

ARCHITECTURAL SUBMISSIONS - SHIPSTEAD-LUCE ACT:

The following applications were submitted to the Commission of Fine Arts for action:

SL 1860 - 6101 16th Street, N. W. - 1 32 sq. foot single-faced construction sign. Approved as temporary sign, 14 June 1956.

SL 1861 - 609 15th Street, N. W. - 1 24 sq. ft. single-faced, illuminated sign. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1863 - 4501 Colorado Avenue, N.W. - 1 brick and cinder-block, 1-story dwelling. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1864 - 4405 Colorado Avenue, N.W. - 1 brick and cinder-block, 1-story dwelling. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1865 - 4409 Colorado Avenue, N.W. - 1 brick and cinder-block, 1-story dwelling. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1866 4413 Colorado Avenue, N.W. - 1 brick and cinder-block, 1-story dwelling. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1867 4417 Colorado Avenue, N.W. - 1 brick and cinder-block, 1-story dwelling. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1868 4421 Colorado Avenue, N.W. - 1 brick and cinder-block, 1-story dwelling. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1869 4425 Colorado Avenue, N.W. - 1 brick and cinder-block, 1-story dwelling. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1870 4429 Colorado Avenue, N.W. - 1 brick and cinder-block, 1-story dwelling. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1871 133 Independence Avenue, S.E. - Remodel building wall and show-window. Approved 14 June 1956.

SL 1825 (see page 23 of attached Minutes of 14 June 1956).

EXHIBIT H

STATEMENT OF DAVID E. FINLEY, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS, BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JUNE 13,1956.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Mr. Chairman, I am glad to have the opportunity to appear here today on behalf of the Commission of Fine Arts and to give you our views with reference to the bridge which it is proposed to build across the Potomac River near the end of Constitution Avenue.

I would like to say in the beginning that, if a bridge is to be built in this area, we greatly prefer the more northerly location across Theodore Roosevelt Island as proposed in H. R. 7472, rather than the location authorized in Public Law 704. We hope that, if there must be a bridge in this area, the Congress will authorize the change of site permitted by H. R. 7472. I would also like to emphasize that the Commission would much prefer a tunnel rather than a bridge, as provided in H. R. 10209. A tunnel would eliminate the principal objections which the Commission of Fine Arts would have to a Potomac bridge crossing at this point.

In reviewing the testimony which has been given during the course of the hearings on this legislation, I have been impressed with the fact that very few witnesses have emphasized the importance of preserving this landscape which adds so much to the beauty of the city of Washington. Even more important, perhaps, is the fact that this landscape provides the setting for four of our great memorials: the one to Abraham Lincoln, The Marine Memorial, The Memorial Bridge, and Theodore Roosevelt Island. A bridge at this point with its connections on both sides of the river, will make these memorials the center of a swirling traffic vortex that will disastrously affect the appearance of the entire area. The memorials themselves may remain, but the beauty of their setting will largely disappear. We should consider very carefully whether we have a right to do this merely to gain some temporary alleviation of traffic problems, particularly when some other solution can be found if there is the will to do so.

It has been repeatedly stated that engineering surveys have shown that practical considerations demand a traffic artery crossing the Potomac at Constitution Avenue. But little or no consideration seems to have been given to the question as to whether the traffic requirements constitute the paramount factor that should be considered, regardless of any damage to the appearance to the city that might result. The Commission of Fine Arts believe there are many valid arguments why a crossing should not be located in the neighborhood of Constitution Avenue. We also believe that, if eventually it is found that traffic requirements necessitate another crossing at this point, then this should be the last of a series of river crossings to be built, not the first, as proposed in this bill.

The Commission is well aware that a landscape is not necessarily harmed by the addition of a handsome bridge. In fact, some landscapes can be greatly improved by the addition of a well designed bridge, as is true of Memorial

EXHIBIT I

Bridge, which adds to, rather than detracts from, the beauty of the setting in which it is placed. There are other points along the river where a bridge could be built without harming the landscape but this is not true of the area between the Key Bridge and the Memorial Bridge. In this particular location we have, by a combination of natural elements and careful design, a civic landscape which approaches perfection in its relation of land, water, and air elements to the city and to the great national monuments which are placed in this area. I know of no civic landscape in any foreign capital or any other American city that surpasses in beauty the one which we have here in Washington. And yet, it is proposed, at the insistence of highway engineers, to sacrifice this landscape to traffic considerations that might well be met in other ways. The Commission of Fine Arts believes that it is its duty to point out once again the gravity of what it considers to be a shortsighted attitude in insisting upon a bridge at this location.

The position of the Commission of Fine Arts has been consistent in this matter. We have not favored previous plans to build bridges in this area. We are opposed to the location of the bridge authorized in P.L. 704 as enacted in 1954. But the fact that we are opposed to the building of a bridge in this area did not prevent us from cooperating since that time with the agencies involved in trying to get the best possible design for a bridge and its approaches, as authorized in this bill. We have had a number of meetings with the designers of the bridge and after our last meeting on February 16,1956, we wrote a letter to Mr. J. N. Robertson, Director of Highways, District of Columbia, from which I would like to quote, in part, as follows:

> "The making of a beautiful bridge structure stretching above the water from bank to bank is the easiest and most feasible part of this problem, even though it will be achieved at the cost of bisecting a serene river landscape of unique and monumental appeal. Our studies of the problem of the approaches, up to this time, have convinced us that your cooperation and our own efforts can scarcely result in anything but an alleviation of a situation that will long be regretted. The compromise solutions, involving constricted approaches on both sides of the river, serve only to emphasize our convictions that there is too little land available in this area for a traffic artery. Such a bridge and its proposed approaches will irreparably damage the parkland and grassy slopes of the area surrounding the great memorials on both sides of the river. The members of the Commission fully appreciate the beauty which a fine bridge and well-designed approaches can create in suitable surroundings, but it is their considered opinion that the most we can hope for here is a twisted complex of approaches to the bridge, on both sides of the river that will scar and mutilate this monumental river landscape, which is so important to the city of Washington."

I hope the Committee will take these matters into consideration in any action they may take with reference to a bridge in the Lincoln Memorial area.

EXHIBIT I

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
7000 INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING
Washington 25, D. C.

May 22,1956

Dear General Lane:

I was very glad to have a talk with you on the telephone last week and to have an opportunity of expressing the concern which the members of the Commission of Fine Arts feel with reference to the plans for replacing the monumental lighting standards in the central area of the city with highway-type mercury-vapor lighting standards.

On several occasions, both verbally and in writing, we have expressed our views on this subject to Mr. J. N. Robertson, District Director of Highways, and to Mr. H. A. Friede, District Electrical Engineer. We have, as you know, inspected the various types of standards that were temporarily erected on Fourteenth Street in the vicinity of the Great Plaza. At the request of Mr. Friede, at a meeting on February 16,1956, the members of the Commission expressed a preference for a sketch of a highway-type lighting standard with a right-angle bracket, which Mr. Friede had prepared as a result of his previous discussions with us. It was never our intention, however, to imply that we approved the use of standards of this design, or with curved bracket, for any part of the city other than outlying areas such as Alaska Avenue, for example.

We were very happy to see the removal of the sample standards that had been set up in the vicinity of the National Gallery of Art on Constitution Avenue; but the members of the Commission, at our last meeting, were very much concerned to see that the old standards had been removed and had been replaced by a new set of standards of the curved-bracket highway-type on 17th and 18th Streets between C and D Streets, Northwest. We noted, also, that these standards, which we find unacceptable, now face the Ellipse, the Pan American Union, the east facade of the Interior Department, and the National Headquarters of the American Red Cross. These standards are in the heart of the monumental area where so many government buildings are placed and are seen by many visitors to Washington.

The present lighting standards were developed after long study and with the advice of eminent and talented designers and architects, such as Henry Bacon, the architect of the Lincoln Memorial. It is a unified and dignified scheme of lighting, providing a design that is well suited to this city. If a greater intensity of light is needed, I am sure the lighting engineers will be able to find a way to increase the intensity without changing the design of the standards which have been developed so successfully for this city.

EXHIBIT J

The Commission asked me to say that they could not approve the use of the new type of lighting standard, except for the outlying areas of the city. We hope that you will use your efforts to prevent further changes in these standards, and would appreciate it if the former standards were replaced in the monumental areas above mentioned. We would be glad to confer with you about this matter, if you would like to do so, at the next meeting of the Commission which will be held on June 14th.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

/s/ David E. Finley

David E. Finley
Chairman

Brig. Gen. Thomas A. Lane
Engineer Commissioner of
the District of Columbia
District Building
Washington 4, D. C.

EXHIBIT J

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Y

THE AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON 13, D. C.

Office of the President

June 11,1956

Dear Mr. Finley:

A National Memorial Committee to honor Red Cross dead, under the chairmanship of General Mark W. Clark has proposed the erection of a memorial on Red Cross Square in memory of the men and women who have given their lives in the service of the American Red Cross.

Mr. Felix de Weldon has been engaged to design a suitable memorial and a brochure describing plans for the memorial, as well as a sketch of Mr. de Weldon's proposal, is enclosed.

Subject to the approval of your Commission, it is proposed that the memorial be erected approximately in the center of the Square bounded by 17th and 18th Streets and D and E Streets, Northwest, Washington,D.C. It would face a monument completed about 25 years ago honoring the service of Miss Jane Delano and other nurses of World War I. The base in marble and the figures in bronze, it is thought that Mr. de Weldon's group would be in harmony with the buildings and grounds and be a dignified addition to this part of the Capital city. Accordingly, I am writing you to ask that your Commission consider this matter with the view to granting your approval to the erection of a memorial substantially as described and as shown in the enclosed sketch. Mr. de Weldon is prepared, I believe, to describe the plans in further detail and also to show photographs of a plaster model.

While the American National Red Cross is not engaged in soliciting funds for this enterprise nor is it actively promoting the project, nevertheless we are completely in sympathy with the purposes of the National Memorial Committee and are hopeful that the Commission will grant its approval.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Ellsworth Bunker

Ellsworth Bunker

The Honorable
David E. Finley
Chairman, Commission of Fine Arts
Room 7000, Department of the Interior
Washington 25, D. C.

EXHIBIT K

C
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THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
7000 INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING
Washington 25, D. C.

26 June 1956

Mr. Ellsworth Bunker, President
The American National Red Cross
National Headquarters
Washington 13, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bunker:

At a meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts on 14 June 1956, I read to the members your letter of 11 June 1956, in which you described the monument that the Committee to honor Red Cross Heroic Dead desires to erect on the grounds of the National Headquarters of the American National Red Cross, and for which you requested the Commission's approval. The members of the Commission were glad to review the project in the early stages of development and to have the sculptor, Mr. Felix de Weldon, explain the plans and his sketch for the sculptural group.

In view of the absence of formal drawings at that time, we were able to approve the project in principle only, but we will be glad to see further steps in the development of the monument as they occur.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ L. R. Wilson
Secretary

EXHIBIT L